

# CONFORMITY

with PIETY, requisite in  
GODS Service.

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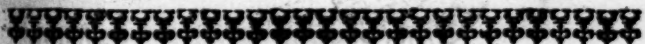
*Delivered in a Visitation Sermon at Kingston  
upon Thames September 8. 1638.*

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By *William Hardwick* Priest and Curate of  
*Reigate, in Surry.*



*Sint unum, Doceant unum, fateantur et unum;  
Unum qui à Christi nomine nomen habent.*



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LONDON:

Printed by *I. Okes* for *Richard Cartwright* and  
are to be sold at his shop in *Duck lane*  
next *Smithfield.* 1638. 2

CONFIRMATION  
with PIETY, regularity  
GODS Service.

Deborah in a Vision Sermon at Kingston  
upon Thames September 8. 1718.

By William Hall, Minister and Curator  
of the Church in Newington.

Printed by J. Sturges, at the Sign of the Anchor, in Newington.




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 To the most Reverend  
 Father in God,  
**WILLIAM** Lord  
 Arch-bishop of *Canterbury*, Pri-  
 mate of all *England* and Metro-  
 politane, Chancellor of the Uni-  
 versity of *Oxford*, and one  
 of his Majesties most ho-  
 nourable privy  
 Councell.

Most Reverend father in God,


 Know your Grace cannot but won-  
 der, that so meane a person every  
 way as my selfe, and one altogether  
 unknowne to your Grace, should pre-  
 sume to offer so poore a Sermon to  
 your sacred hands : neither am I ig-  
 norant how much this my ambition will expose me to  
 further Censure : But God Almighty knowes , 'tis not  
 your greatnesse , but exemplary Piety and goodnesse,  
 which hath imboldned me to shroud these Papers under  
 your Graces Wings. And 'tis no small encouragement

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

to me, to heare how ready your Grace is, not onely to countenance the Labours of the Learned of the times, but also the meanest endeavours of the poorest Priests, who ayme at the peace of Holy Church, whose Dignity, next under our Blessed Saviour, and our pious Sovereaigne, your Grace, to the admiration of all men, continually seekes to Advance. This your Graces Charity towards Others, hath made me to adventure to cast this Sermon at your Graces feet: which as it aimes at, what your Grace delights in, Piety and Conformity, so in all humility it begs your Paternall Benediction; which if it have the happinesse to Obtaine, I doubt not but the Reader shall find no small benefit by it: And I the meanest of those who wait on Gods sacred Altar, shall daily sollicite the throne of Mercy for your prosperous successe in the affaires of the Church Militant; that so, when you shall have finished your Course, your Grace may be crowned with glory in the Church Triumphant: and this shall ever be the prayer of

your Graces in all  
humility,

William Hardwick,



# Conformity with Piety, Requisite in Gods Service.

**Psal. 119. 125.**

*I am thy Servant, give me understanding, that I may  
know thy testimonies.*



Whoever he be, Be he of what state  
or condition soever, so long as he  
lives here, he is but a servant; and  
if it be his happinesse to be admit-  
ted a Saint in Heaven, He is usber-  
red in with that Title, *Euge bone  
et fidelis serve, wel done thou good*

*Matt. 25.*

and faithfull servant, enter into thy Masters joy.  
But here, I must confesse, we are not a little puzzled a-  
bout the choice of our service; for though in our  
Baptisme we did most solemnly renounce the service  
of the World, the Flesh, and the Divell, yet by our  
practice All of us do declare that we have still a liking  
to each of them: the Flesh hath some, the World o-  
thers: I will not say the Divell hath most; yet thus  
much I dare say, that they who have wholly given up  
themselves to the service of the Flesh and the World,  
shall at length by woefull Experience finde that  
*Capiet quia Damon, The Divell will have All.*

**B**

Well,

Well, though it be thus with most, yet the Saints of God have made another choyce: for looke but upon this our *David*, who having had some knowledge of the world, and not a little tryal of the flesh, and oftentimes having beene foyled by Sathan, yet by the mercy of God, on the one side; and his owne hearty repentance on the other, he frees himselfe from their (service I will not call it, but) slavery. And now finding Almighty God, really to be his God, he binds himselfe (as it were) Apprentice to him; and as in other places, so here he acknowledgeth himselfe his, and none but his servant: *Servus ego tuus*, I am thy Servant, &c.

Not to trouble you with a large Discourse of the booke of *Psalmes* in generall, or of this so large and pithy a *Psalm* in particular, which, in the judgement of *St. Ambrose*, excelleth the rest as *Barre*. As the light of the Sunne exceeds the light of the Moone: I come rather to the Text it selfe, uttered by one, who was no lesse a King than a Prophet: And ~~was~~ was a Prophet, and a good Prophet, not unworthy the imitation of us, the sonnes of the Prophets, and of all those likewise who beare any affection or good will, either to Prophets, or Prophet Children.

In the Words two things offer themselves to our Consideration. First, our Prophets profession, *I am thy Servant*. Secondly, his petition, *Give mee understanding, that I may know thy testimonies*.

In his Profession we are to consider two things: First, his Condition; *Servus*, he was a Servant: Secondly, *cujus*, whose servant he profess'd himselfe

selfe to bee, *Thus*, thy *Servant*.

Then in his petition, we are to consider the thing prayed for: *Understanding*. Secondly, the means of attaining it, and that is by way of gift: *Da intellectum*, give mee understanding. Lastly, we have the end why he prayes for this gift of understanding, and that is, that hee may know the testimonies of his God. These are the particulars, which by Gods assistance, I am come to treat of at this time: Wherefore relying both on your patience and charity, with as much brevity as may be of each of them. First, therefore of the first, our *Prophets Profession*, and in that too first of his Condition, *servus*, I am a *Servant*.

If you please to peruse the Scriptures, those sacred Oracles of our God, yee shall finde, that it hath ever bene the humble acknowledgement of the Saints, that they are *Servants*: who, though they have bene advanced in Church and Commonwealth, and so distinguished from inferiour people, by gracious and honourable Titles, yet with none of them were they more delighted, than with this of *Servant*: for the present, our *Prophet* makes this good: For 'tis not *Rex ego*, or *Propheta ego*, *I am a King*, or *I am a Prophet*: but *servus ego*, *I am a servant*. As much likewise appeares by the Apostles; who, for the most part, assume this title of *Servant*, and in a manner preferre it before that of *Apostle*: for this they usually mention first: as *Rom. I. Paul*, *a servant of Jesus Christ*, called to bee an *Apostle*. So likewise *1. Pet. I. Simon Peter*, *a servant, and an apostle*. Doubtlesse, they had no small honour in

being 'Apostles, but yet their Happinesse they accounted Greater in being the servants of Iesus Christ. *Damnatu Apostolorum unus, servorum nullus.* One of the Apostles was cast off, never any of Gods servants so: Thus likewise Prophets have bin excluded; Heaven hath beene shut against some of them: what though they have thought to justifie themselves with their Lord, Lord, we have prophesied in thy name? Yet this hath not served their ruine, for they have beene dismissed with a *Non novi vos, discedite*, I know you not, depart from me yee workers of iniquity. But never were servants used thus: and therefore in this Title the Saints have taken more comfort, and have had more confidence then in any other: *Servus*, saith our Prophet here, I am a servant.

Here then take notice we may of our Condition: what though many of us are preferred to places of Eminency, and to put a lustre on our Glory, are Graced with Titles answerable to our places: yet for all this, 'twill not be amisse, amidst them all, to take this along with us, that we are none other then servants likewise: yee cannot imagine how this will let out the Apostumated matter of Pride, which otherwise may swell and burst us. Humane frailty is such, that men are apt to be enamoured of their Advancement, and if they have bin so happy, as to gaine a popular applause, this their supposed Happinesse, if they have not somewhat to keep them under, may proove their ruine and destruction: From which fearefull downfall that we may be secure, 'twill not (I say) be amisse, while we are in the height of our Happinesse to reflect

fleet now and then upon this our Condition to which we are subjected: *Serui sumus*, we are servants.

But why this here, may some say: are there any so ignorant as not to know this? who so stupid, as not to acknowledge it? This is the voice of men of all rankes: all men acknowledge themselves servants: And, your servant, and at your service are the ordinary Parenthesis of our Discourse: Nay, the whole World is come to that passe, that many will not only conclude of themselves that they are Servants, but also in a contemptible manner reflect upon others, and in a sordid and base way use many, and those (I may say) their betters, none otherwise then as Servants; and 'tis well, if not worse: should I instance in our selves, in men of our owne Tribe, 'twill (I feare) be too apparent. \* Many of which, though they are such, whose Deserts might challenge an awfull respect unto their persons, yet in the opinion of many none more contemptible, none more despised then they. We, beloved, with such are *serui ut hominibus*, the only Servants, yea, Hirelings, nay what not? poore *Micajah* the parson of the parish, if he besed with the bread of Affliction, and with the Water of Affliction; 'tis enough for him: A stoole, a Table, and a Candlestick are a Competency: As for Reverence and Respect to his person, they are Workes of Supererogation, and have beene along since banished hence with Popery. And indeede, thus it hath beene in all Ages. The Apostle Saint *Paul* observed: as much in his time: Wee are (saith hee) made the filthinesse of the World, and the of-scouring of all things.

1 Cor. 4. 13.

B 3 Thus,

Thus, should we descend to this present day, and trace the times as Historians have recorded them, we should finde even the choycest of Gods *Prophets*, by many accounted no better. I am sure for the present, none more censured, none more neglected, none more vilified, none more slighted in many places, than we of the Clergy be. And as for that Title wherewith Almighty God hath beene pleased to grace us: that same Title of ours (I say) is not mentioned but in derision: every ignorant and prophane wretch hath the name of *Priest* in his mouth, which with a kinde of scumme hee casts into the faces of those, who professe this sacred function: nay farther, such is the impudency of the Age, that he now a dayes is accounted a Wit of the times, who Libells, or envies most against the Fathers of the Church: the best of whom, are in the account of these men, none other than meane servants; not as *David* here acknowledged himselfe, but in their owne phrase and meaning, an unworthy, an undeserving generation, which the world could better spare than any other profession whatsoever. But to stoppe the mouthes of such prophaners of God, his servants, and his Ordinances, let them but take along with them the *Casse*, the next thing to be considered, and then, though servants we be, yet not Servants of so small account, as they would willingly have us, being we are servants onely of our God: *servus tuus*, I am thy servant, that's the next.

A servant (yea see) this our Prophet was, but not every ones: 'tis *servus tuus*. Indeepe, in some respects



spects we may be rearmed your Servants, as the Angels themselves are : But this service of theirs and ours to you, is but a branch of that service which wee owe unto our God. We preach (saith the Apostle) 1 Cor. 4. 5. not our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord ; and our selves your servants, for Jesus sake : so that all the service we doe to you, is with reference to our Lord and Master, Christ Jesus ; none otherwise we owe, none otherwise we performe : Almighty God is our Master, and his servants the Saints have onely profest themselves to be. *David* here would adhere to none other, none other Master would he acknowledge :

*Tuis*, I am thine. I have found *David* my Psal. 89. servant, (saith God) with much holy Oyle have I annointed him. There God had chosen *David*, wherefore *David*, as in other places, so here, to shew what liking he had to his Master, professeth himselfe to be his servant ; *servus tuus*, I am thy servant.

Now this was his reference to God, to bee his servant ; and indeede not a man living, but in a sort may be said to be Gods servant. But yet there are some who are servants in a nearer kind : as namely, those whom he hath set on worke to some choise and notable designement, either in the Church, thus *St Paul* saith of himselfe, *Rom. 1*. That hee was a servant of Christ, set apart to the preaching of the Gospel, or in the Common-wealth : Thus is this our Prophet marked out, (as I shewed you but now) I have found *David* my servant : Now these are not onely Gods Subjects, over whom hee rules *Revel. 19.* by generall command, as a King : but they are also men of his Household, whom he go-  
vernes.

vernes ~~servants~~, by speciall power, as a Master: so that in this respect, *David*, and other, the Saints of God, whom hee publickly imployes in his services, in a speciall manner are termed his Servants.

Hence then we may see both our Dignity, and our Duty: our Dignity first, in that we are admitted to be Gods Servants in such a manner. Should any of us bee entertain'd as Servants to our Sovereigne, how would wee thinke our selves graced? how honoured? Why behold, beloved, He whom we serve is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and one, at whose feet all the Princes, and mighty ones of the earth must cast their Scepters. Why therefore should any of us bee dejected, having such a Master? certainly, if our Consciences can assure us, that our God called us to serve at his Altar, we cannot but be happy, wee cannot but bee honourable.

What though some Currish *Doegs* maligne the *Priests*, and endeavour to bring them into contempt? yet God and good men will ever honour them, and that for their workes sake. And truly our gracious God, for the better entertainment of his message brought by us, hath ever graced us with Noble Titles: though we in Humility are to acknowledge our selves, with this our *Prophet*, Servants: yet our God will have us reputed as his Embassadors, and as shining Starres; yea, as Angels. (Thus hath hee whatsoever the world thinks to the contrary) provided for us, who are imployed in this so sacred a businesse, as the Ministry is: nay, not the meanest of his servants shall be neglected, our Saviour saith as much: *If any man serve me, him will my Father honour.*

Ioh. 14. 26.

The

The consideration of which in the next place should put us in minde of our Duty. *servus est nomen officij*: the very name of servant implies some duty to bee performed. Wherefore if yee please to call to mind what yee expect of your servants; yee may in a manner perceive, what God requires of you.

Now two things there are, which we principally commend in our servants; Obedience and Reverence: idle and sawcy servants wee account unworthy the meanest wages. Why, beloved, the same our God requireth of us, both *Priest* and *People*; all of us must be obedient; all of us must be Reverent. We that are his *Priests*, must ever be in a readinesse to do our Maisters service; so that when he shall be pleased to acquaint us with his will, and shall commaund us to feede his flocke, and to tell *Judah* her sinnes, and *Israel* her transgressions: we must not then linger like *Lot* in *Sodom*, nor loiter by the way, now framing one excuse, then another: But to our businesse wee must goe, our taske we must take in hand, be it never so hard, never so difficult: knowing that there is a *Vae*, a woe unto those who do the worke of the Lord negligently, or with *Saint Paul*, *Vae mihi si non Evangelizavero*, Woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel.

1erc. 48. 19.

1 Cor. 9. 16.

And no lesse a curse hangs over the head of the Laity, if they be negligent: for as we of the Clergy must shew our obedience to our Maister by declaring his will to you, so must you shew your obedience by submitting your selves to the will of God; nor onely hearing, but doing of his word: It rests in you

to obey the forme of Doctrine which yee are taught, when with the *Bereans* yee have sought and found it to be true, and no way repugnant to Holy Writ. Oh, beloved, when your consciences tell you, that yee are guilty of such sinnes, which yee heare at any time taxed in the Pulpit, whether they be sinnes of blood, or sinnes of uncleannesse, or sins of discontent, sinnes of muttering and murmuring against the God of Heaven, and his Vice-Gerent here on earth: In a word, whatsoever sinnes they be, your obedience cannot better be shewed, than by your Repentance for that which is past, and your pious reformation and amendment for the time to come; all which are the true signes of obedience, and by which alone the servants of God are discovered really to be his.

Neither is here all; besides our Obedience, Reverence also is expected. Thus much we expect from our servants, and thus much God expects from us; as *Mal. 1. 6*. If I be a Father, where is mine Honour? If I be a Master, where is my feare? saith the Lord of Hosts. Who is he amongst us, that hath the spirit of a man within him, that will suffer his servant to bee Haile-fellow with him, to sit cheek by jole by him, or to sit covered in his presence? now, cannot we brooke this disrespect in our servants, be they never so faithfull? and thinke ye that our God, when wee are performing any part of his service, especially when we are here in his house, his presence Chambers: thinke ye (I say) that our God will take this our male-part behaviour well at our hands? What do ye talke of Gods requiring onely our hearts? ye are mistaken, God requireth as well our Hats, our Knees, and our whole

whole bodies : surely if God requireth our hearts, which are our chiefest parts wherewith we doe him service, he doth then comprehend all the rest, which are inferiour and lesse noble.

But alas, these he shall hardly get of any of us, in these so nice and wanton times : The practices of too too many confirme this, whose irreverence in the Holy Assembly is so apparant, as if they had none other conceite of their God, than that he is an Idoll of the Heathens, which hath eares, and heares not ; eyes, but see not : Here, here in the Church (with grieve of soule I speake it) we may to too often discover some laughing, others prating ; some Courting, others bargaining, so that St. Chrysostomes complaint may well be taken up in these dayes : *Alios video sta-*

*re, & nugari, dum preces sunt; neque solum dum preces sunt, sed & dum sacerdos benedicit : nescis quod cum Angelis stas? cum illis cantas? cum illis hymnos dicis?*

Hom. 24. in  
AG.

*& stas Rides? non mirum esset, si fulmen emitteretur non solum in eos, sed etiam in nos, digna enim fulmini sunt haec.* Some (saith he) I behold trifling or toying, when others at prayers; and not onely thus in prayer time, but also when the Priest is pronouncing the blessing : what, knowest thou not that thou standest with Angels? and that thou singest Hymnes and Psalmes with them? and standest thou laughing? It were no wonder, if thunder should be cast, not onely on those, but also on us, for these things, such irreverence as this deserveth such a judgement.

And againe the same Father : *Stat sacerdos Dei orationem offerens cunctorum ; tu autem rides, nihil times non contremiscis? non collegis teipsum : in aulam Regiam intraturus, & habitu & oculis*

*Et incesſu componis te & exornas : Huc autem intraturus, ubi eſt Aula Regis celeſtis, rides, garris, ambulas, negotiaris.* Gods Priest ſtands offering up the prayers of the people, and what doeſt thou laugh, fearing nothing? What doeſt thou not tremble? doeſt thou not recollect thy ſelfe? Wert thou to enter into the Kings Court, thou wouldeſt have a care both of thy Habite, and thy whole carriage, but when thou commeſt hither, where the Court of the King of Heaven is kept, thou laugheſt, thou talkeſt, thou walkeſt, and art otherwiſe uncivilly buſied. But what (thinke ye) is the cauſe of this irreverence of ours? if you pleaſe, I will tell you what I conceive:

There is a Concluſion highly cryed up amongst us, and which hath oftentimes bene objected to me, and 'tis this: That Churches are none other than ordinary and common places, but onely in time of Divine Service. For my part, I confeſſe ingenuouſly, I cannot but bluſh to heare ſuch an unfavoury aſſertion to proceede from any mouth, which makes a profeſſion of Chriſt and Chriſtian Religion: Oh Beloved, ſhall we who are Chriſtians, belch out that againſt the Houſe of our God, which never any Pagan did againſt the Temple of his feigned Deity? Bleſſed Brethren, are not theſe Houſes alwayes ſeparated to a holy uſe? ſet apart to a holy imployment? doe not finnes of Theft, or of uncleaneſſe, &c. committed in them, appeare with a farre more ghawſty and horrid countenance, than if they had bene committed in other places?

In



In a word, when wee set our feete on these sacred  
pavements, doe not these Stones we tread on, put us  
in minde of our duty, as that we have holy thoughts,  
holy gestures? Twere a happinesse, not to bee ex-  
prest, could we at all times, and in all places have  
holy thoughts of our God: which, because our  
weaknesse is such that we cannot, Almighty God  
hath appointed set times, and set places for the per-  
forming these holy Duties. Now the place ap-  
pointed for Gods publick worship, is the Church;

now, what a Church is, Saint *Chrysostome* tells <sup>Hom. 36. in</sup>  
us: *Non est Ecclesia constrina, aut vana, aut* <sup>1 Cor.</sup>  
*taberna, aut Officina forensis; sed sacra Angelo-*  
*rum, Regia Celi, Caelum ipsum.* The Church is  
no Barbers or Apothecaries shop, 'tis no *Hof-*  
*minster* or *Guild-hall*, but the place of Angels,  
the Court of Heaven, yea, Heaven it selfe: into  
the which when the Saints heretofore entered,  
what prostrations, what incurvations did they  
use? Oh how they did bedew the pavements with  
their Teares? Thus reverent were the Saints, the  
Servants of God, in the House of their gracious  
Master. And indeede, why should they not?  
for Nature it selfe teacheth no lesse, Never Pa-  
gan entred into the Temple of his Idoll, but  
with Reverence, and what now? Shall Idols have  
this, and not the Living God? Shall Heathens  
bee reverent, and not Christians? Let no man  
torture himselfe with a causelesse feare of Su-  
perstition, in being thus Reverent in the holy  
Assemblies. Indeepe, were our Reverence ren-  
dered to the walles, or to some Image, or Cru-  
cifix, or the like, there were no apparent cause

of feare; but whereas our Reverence is tendered onely to God himfelfe, I fee no reason at all in the world; why wee should not use all Reverence that possible may be in this House of God. Wherefore, ye that are fearefull of Superstition, let me desire you to be as fearefull of prophanesse; fall not into the one, by flying from the other. Now for Christians to tread in Gods Courts, without putting of their Hats, bending their bodies, bowing their knees, and other the like gestures of Reverence, if this be not outward prophanesse, I seriously professe, I know not what prophanesse is.

Yea, but may some say, This outward Reverence may shelter much hypocrisie, and therefore why should it bee so much urged, as now a dayes it is?

*I answer*; suppose it doth; suppose, many may draw neare to God with their lips, when their hearts are farre from him; as also sit here with their heads uncovered, when their Hearts are at home shut up in their chests; or otherwise gone after their covetousnesse; what of all this? shall (say I) the Hypocrisie of some make others irreverent? God forbid: For my part, when I come into a Church, and there behold a poore sinner kneeling upon his knees, weeping with his eyes, and with an humble and lowly Reverence both petitioning and hearing his God, my charity bids me thinke the best, as how that these shewes are not without substance, because I know no other; it being a peculiar priviledge and prerogative of Almighty God to be *knowing*, a knower, a searcher of the Heart: But againe, let me see a man here sitting

sitting in his Masters House, in his Masters presence, as if he were rather God Almightyes fellow; than his Servant; seldome uncovering his head; seldome bending his knee, or sawcily lolling on his Elbowes: let such a man make never so many protestations that his heart is upright to Godward, I shall hardly bee brought to beleeeve him: for if there were any zeale, any Reverence in the inward man, it would appeare, and shew it selfe in the outward man. Well, I say no more but this, know that ye are Servants, and then ye cannot but be obedient, ye cannot but be reverent.

One thing more I have to commend unto you from this Title of *Servant*, before I leave it, and 'tis this:

Servants (ye see) we are all of us; now servants can never performe their businesse well, or commendably, unlesse they agree together: where there is contention amongst servants, that Household is alwayes out of order, and the Master of such a Family suffereth very much thereby himselfe. Why just thus it is in this great Family, the Common-wealth; thus 'tis likewise in the Church: where there is not Unity, Unanimity, and Conformity amongst us the Servants of God, amongst us the Stewards of God, and dispensers of his Word, all things goe to wrack. I would to God therefore, that there were that unity amongst us, as ought to be amongst those, who serve one God, and professe one Faith, one Baptisme: Happy would it be for you of the Laity, and no lesse happinesse would redound to us of the Clergy. Doubtlesse such unfavoury Comparisons would not then be so often heard at your Table, I am for

*Paul,*

*Paul*, and another, I am for *Apollos*; I am for this Preacher, and I am for that. The cause of all which, is as well the want of Conformity amongst the Teachers, as want of stayednesse amongst the Hearers: O, when it comes once to this passe, that—

*Scinditur incertae studia in contraria Clerus.*

When we of the Clergy shall be full of oppositions, ever and anon banding one against another, and thinking scorn to be Ruled or Directed by those, who are the Fathers of the Church, I mean the most reverend Arch-bishops, and the right reverend Bishops: when we shall disagree amongst our selves: yea, when some of us shall not agree with our selves, but be this day of another minde, than we were yester day, and in this place than in that; and all this oftentimes not for Conscience sake, but policy: conforming in the University, and subscribing before the Bishop, but sounding out an Alarum of defiance to all such regularity and orders when they are sent amongst the people; accounting the Ceremonies of the Church indifferent amongst the Learned, as being not able to answer them; but crying out amongst the vulgar that the zeale of the Brotherhood must by no meanes tolerate. Now say I, what other thing procedes from this non-conformity, and Multiplicity of Contradictions, but Contentions and Heart-burnings in every place? This double-dealing hath bred in many simple men and women, yea, some of them are such, who (I am perswaded) have an earnest desire to feare GOD, and are such, who tremble at his sacred word, yet such Religious soules as these have a doubtfull wayering when they enter into the

the Church, whether they may kneele, when others kneele; or pray, when the Minister reades Prayer; or heare the Sermon, when a conformable Priest poth preach; or whether they may bow at the sacred name of Jesus, or suffer their Children to be baptized with the signe of the Crosse, with a hundred such like: In a word, whether they may come to Church on Wednesdaies and Fridayes, and such like times, when there is no Sermon. Thus, halting guides (saith a learned Divine of ours) have begot limping Schollers. The Church is disturbed, our prayers hindered; one swelleth against another, one speaketh evill against another, one judgeth another; and all this, because there is not that conformity and unity as should be amongst those, who, with *David* here, professe themselves the servants of Almighty God.

*W. Westerman. B.D. Solomon's Porch.*

But now, doe yee desire to have all redrest? as indeed, which of us should not? Why then doe yee, (I beseech you) as this our Prophet did, who, as hee profest himselfe the servant of God, so hee now sues unto him for that, which may make his service acceptable, and what other is that, than understanding: which leades me to my second branch, his *Petition*; and in that, first to the blessing prayed for: *Understanding*.

We have here (ye see) much fruit to gather, and but a little more time allotted: that therefore which remaines I will husband as well as I can, that so yee may have some taste of all.

That which the eye is to the Body, the same is understanding to the soule. A Body without eyes can see nothing, and a soule without understanding

can judge of nothing. This is that therefore that *David* prayes for: *Da intellectum*, Give mee understanding. And indeed if Understanding bee needfull for any, then surely for a Prophet, a chiefe part of whose Office, is to bee a guide to the blind, and to instruct those that are ignorant and voyde of Understanding: All which, how can hee possibly doe, who wants this gift of Understanding himselfe.

But blessed *David*, what neede hadst thou to pray thus for Understanding? Hadst thou lived in these dayes, the lesse knowledge, the lesse understanding thou hadst had, the better hadst thou beene accepted amongst many, or else how comes it to passe that poore ignorant Mechanicks are so highly set up, and so often cryed up, as the onely zealous Preachers, and Rebukers of sinne: with such Admirers of ignorance, all others, for the most part, are but Time-servers, or Court Flatterers. But now, if such *Enthusiasts* as these, can make their tongues now as nimble, as their Shuttle was heretofore, then wee crye out straight way *Digitus Dei*; Surely, these men were sent from Heaven; though what they deliver be nothing: for the most part but railing, and the maine part of their Tautologicall and tedious Discourse, tend to the upholding such a Conclusion as this, that they are the best Christians, who are the worst Subjects. Such (Teachers I will not say but) Bablers, if they have enough of Impudence, care not how little of Understanding. But our Prophet (yee see) heere was of another minde, understanding hee wanted,

under-



understanding he sues for, *Da intellectum*, give mee Understanding.

But what? had he no understanding at all? yes, *habebat intellectum* (saith St. Ambrose) *sed ut redundare sibi crederet, uberiorem inquit.* In Loc. Hee had understanding, but he desires a larger measure of it, thereby intimating thus much unto us, that, while wee are cloathed with the ragges of our Mortality, there is no hope of an absolute perfection in this so Noble a faculty of the soule: And therefore they who fancy that they understand all things, may justly bee suspected to understand nothing as they should. This our Prophet, 100. profess'd that hee had more understanding than his Teachers: and yet behold hee had not so much, but that he wants more, and more here hee prays for: And 'tis St. Austines Advice, on this my Text; *Nunquam intermittenda est ista petitio* (saith hee) *non enim sufficit accipisse intellectum, & Dei Testimonia didicisse, nisi semper accipiat, & quodammodo semper bibatur de fonte lucis aeternae.* This Petition ought alwaies to bee had in remembrance, for 'tis not sufficient to have received understanding, and to have learned the Testimonies of God, unlesse we alwaies receive, and after a sort continually drinke of the Fountaine of eternall Light. And to say the truth, the benefit that will redound to us hereby, should make us ever mindfull of the Petition: for as all mischief attendes on Ignorance, so all happinesse waites on Knowledge and understanding. If this bee not so, I appeale to this Learned Audience. Blessed

Fathers and Brethren, what is the cause now a-  
 dayes, I pray you, of all the discontents  
 and jarres in our Church, but want of understand-  
 ing? Men void of understanding are apt to em-  
 brace Fury for Zeale, and Superstition for Devotion:  
 Oh how prone are we to accuse the actions of our  
 Brethren, which we understand not? Thus *Papists*  
 deale with us on the one side, and *Presbyterians*  
 and *Separatists* on the other. First, they of the  
 Church of *Rome* crye out, that we are utter enemies  
 to Mortification, being we have banished (as they say)  
 all meanes tending thereunto, as Fasting, Confessi-  
 on, and other the like workes of Humiliation;  
 But yee that are judicious know all this to be  
 false, and that all this is a meere slander; for  
 they understand us not. Indeed, we teach you that  
 yee are not to put any merit in Fasting; but other-  
 wise we affirme and account it to bee an excellent  
 helpe unto Devotion, and so according to the Ar-  
 ticles given at these Visitations, we acquaint you with  
 those times of Fasting, which are appoynted by the  
 Church. So likewise for Confession, our Church is  
 so farre from being an enemy to it, that (though  
 we doe not make it a picke-locke of the State) we use  
 it as a Cordiall for afflicted Consciences; and so  
 are wee directed in our *Rubricke* for the Visitation  
 of the sicke, where likewise is set downe a forme  
 of Absolution to be pronounced by the *Priest* upon  
 hearing the Confession of his Penitentiary. Thus  
 in divers others other particulars could I instance,  
 would the time permit, wherein they shamefully tra-  
 duce us, & that, because they understand us not. And  
 againe no lesse fouly doe our *Amsterdamiens* sal upon

us with bitter Invectives, accusing us for our harme-  
lesse, reverend, and significant Ceremonies; which  
did they but truly understand, I am very confident  
they would be farre better affected towards us. So  
that ye see the necessity of understanding, and that  
for men of all Ranks, both Priests and people; little  
charity can be shewed the one to the other without  
it: which now if ye have a desire to attaine, be ye  
but pleased to follow me with this our Prophet, and  
he will shew you the *modus* how to procure it: Doe  
ye pray, God will give it; tis his gift, that's the se-  
cond; *Da intellectum*, Give me understanding.

*Intellectus spirituale munus est, (Ambr.) & ideo in Lo-*  
*quod Dei est, a Domino postulatur*: Understanding  
is a spirituall gift; and therefore what is Gods pe-  
culiar, is sought for at Gods hands. So St. Hierome,  
*A te discam, & non ab Hæreticis & Judeis*: I will *In Loc.*  
neither learne of Hereticks or Jewes; neither of Phi-  
losophers nor Humanists; Thou onely O Lord, shalt  
be my Teacher: And this is none other than what is  
recorded in Holy Writ. Doubtlesse, saith *Elihu* in  
the Booke of *Job*, there is a spirit in Man, but the *Chap. 32. 8.*  
inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.  
Were it from Nature, all would have it; or were it  
incident to Old age, ancient men could not want  
it; or if Labour could procure it, the diligent might  
abound with it. Surely saith *Job*, there is a wayne *chap. 28. 1, 2*  
for the Silver, and a place for Gold where they fine it:  
Iron is taken out of the Earth, and Brasse is molten  
out of the stone, &c. But verse 12. where is Wisdome  
to be found? where is the place of Understanding?  
Hee answers, verse 23. GOD onely knoweth the  
way thereof. If therefore any of you lacke Wis-  
dome,

dome, saith Saint James, let him aske of God, and it shall be given him. A man may read much, hee may heare much, he may converse much; but if God doe not open the eyes of the Intellect, if he doe not cleare the Understanding, he shall groape even at Noone-day: And as Mr. Calvin on my Text, *Parum prodeset Legem in auribus nostris sonare, vel scriptam oculis nostris propani, & hominis voce enarrari, nisi correctio nostro stupore, intus nos Deus arcano Spiritus sui instinctu dociles redderet.* It skills little either to heare or read the Law, unlesse Almighty God by the secret instinct or Inspiration of his Holy Spirit make us docile, and capable of his Heavenly Counsell. If therefore thy Understanding bee over-clouded with the vapours of Errour or Ignorance, downe then on thy knees to thy God, and touch not a Booke or a Paper, till thou hast made thy way by some pious Ejaculation or other: And then, if thou findest the successe answerable to thy desire, blesse God for it, and be not thou proud of what thou hast attained; for what thou hast, is Gods gift; whether it bee the gift of Tongues, or the gift of Prophecie, or what other gift soever; each of them, all of them descended from the Father of Lights: Hee was the giver of it, and none else.

And withall, I would have you take notice, that as God gives understanding, so he gives it ordinarily by meanes: To us of the Clergy by Prayer and study, and to you of the Laity, usually by our Ministry: so that, if yee doe not frequent the publick Assemblies, and seek for understanding and knowledge from the lips of the Priests, yee may thanke  
your

your selves, if yee continue ignorant still: Our Prophet seemes to intimate as much here; for the word which hee useth for *Testimonies*, in the Originall signifies as well the place, where they were to bee learned, the Congregation, as the Testimonies themselves: so that *David*, as hee would learne them, so hee would learne them in the right *Ubi*; not in private Conventicles, where he might have heard *Anarchy* cryed up as the ready way to peace and Piety; but in the publicke Assemblies, in the Congregation, in the holy Sanctuary of his God.

And oh that once we could learne to see our Happinesse! the Happinesse wee enjoy in these Times! Oh how ought we to blesse our God, who hath given us freedom to come into his Courts, no *Spanish* Inquisition; no Lawes or Edicts to the contrary: All the Lawes we have are to compell us, and to punish us for not comming hither; and for our further encouragement to frequent the Courts of our God, such hath bene the Piety of our Gracious Sovereigne, and the care of the vigilant Fathers of our Church, that for the bettering of our Understanding, they have put life againe into that meanes, which a long time hath laine (as it were) in a dead sleepe amongst us. And if yee would know what that is, 'tis Catechizing; without which all our other Labours are in vaine: 'tis that which must cleare the eyes of the Vulgar and Common people; without it, understand certainly they cannot: Where this Catechizing is not used, preach wee may, yea, and *Ad Clepsydram* too; but heere's the mischief of it; all our Preaching will have no better successe than this, wee shall but  
Preach

preach you into ignorance. But *Manum de Tabula*; enough of this for the present: A word or two of the last Branch, the end why hee prayeth thus for *Understanding*, and I have done.

The end (yee see here) is *That hee may know the Testimonies of his God*; and no marvell that hee desires to have an insight in them; for the knowledge of these infinitely excelleth all other Learning whatsoever. In humane Learning a Devill in Hell doth wonderfully surpass the best Proficients amongst men; but this Knowledge of the Testimonies of God, and of his mercy to us in Christ testified unto us in them, surpasseth the comprehension of any Angell of darknesse whatsoever: for it is the Spirit of God onely which knoweth the things of God; and therefore here let us fixe; and that understanding we have in all other Arts and Sciences, let us use as a Hand-maid unto this.

*De Inter.  
Dom. c. 12.*

But yet here is not all; there is a knowledge of Practice, as well as of Judgment required of us; *Conscientia* as well as *Scientia* is expected: 'Tis a Complaint of Saint Bernards, *Multi querunt Scientiam, pauci Conscientiam*; Many are inquisitive after Science, few after Conscience. *Si verò tanto studio & felicitudine quæreretur Conscientia, quante quæritur secularis & vana Scientia, & citius apprehenderetur, & utilis retineretur*: But if Conscience were with as great study and care sought after as vaine and worldly Science is, it would bee both sooner obtained, and with farre more profit retained. Let every man therefore looke to his Conscience, to his Life, to his Conversation: If wee that preach, and yee that professe



professe Religion, be carelesse of these, wee worth the time that ever wee were borne; for that same knowledge that wee have of the Lawes and Testimonies of our God, shall be so faire from excusing, that it shall accuse us rather. *He that knows his Masters will, and doth it not,* (saith our Saviour) *shall be beaten with many stripes:* And no marvaile, for the glory of our Master seemes to be very much ecclipsed by such disorderly servants.

I remember devout *Salvian* brings in the Pagans insulting over the Christians, whose lives were not agreeable to their knowledge. *In nobis* (saith that Father) *Christus patitur opprobrium, in nobis Lex Christiana patitur maledictum:* Both Christ and his Law are scandalized by us: *De nobis enim dicunt Pagani, Ecce quales sunt Christiani, qui Christum colunt?* Behold, this is the common report of Pagans concerning us: *Ubi est Lex Catholica quam credunt? ubi sunt Pietatis & Castitatis precepta quae discunt?* Where is this Catholick Law which they beleeeve? where are these precepts of Piety and Chastity, which they learne? *Evangelia legunt, & impudici sunt; Apostolos audiunt, & inebriantur; Christum sequuntur, & rapiunt; vitam improbam agunt, & probam Legem habere se dicunt.* They read the Gospells, and yet are uncleane; they heare the Apostles, they frequent Sermons, and yet are Drunkards; they follow Christ, and yet are Theeves; they lead a wicked life, and yet they boast that they have a righteous Law. But now, if ye please, yee shall heare what these Heathen people inferre and conclude upon all this; *Falsum planè est quod aiunt se bona discere, quod jactant se sanctae Legis precepta re-*

De Guber.  
Dei. l. 4.

*tinere; si enim bona discerent, boni essent.* 'Tis altogether false (say they) that they learne good things, and as they boast, that they retaine the Rules of a holy Law; for if those things which they learne were good, they then would be good themselves. Thus doe we, who would be accounted Christians, bring our God, our Religion, our Profession into contempt, if our lives bee not answerable to our knowledge.

Which, I would to God, every one of us would take into our consideration, that so at length wee may bee carefull to adorne our Profession by our more than ordinary Piety. And as for those who will still be refractory, ye that have the Rod of Correction in your hands, let them smart for it: Beare it not (I beseech you) in vaine, but smite, and smite home; wee must preach, but 'tis you that must punish. And as for you who are Churchwardens, and sworne Officers to dee God Almighty service in his Church, looke yee likewise to your Oaths: 'Tis Gods cause, not your owne, which yee are sworne to defend. And therefore let Whore-masters, and Drunkards, and prophaners of the Lords Day, and blasphemous Swearers, and such like lewd livers be brought to feele the Discipline of our Mother *Holy Church*, whose Doctrine they have so much disparaged by their unholy lives. Certainly, if ever the *Latine* or *Roman Tongue* deserve to be tearmed the Language of the Beast, 'tis when Churchwardens come in with their *Omnia benè*, whereas nothing but swearing and whooring, and such like disorders keepe their Rendezvous in their Parish;

this

this one word more, and I have done : Be ye care-  
full, I beseech you, of your Duty, as we will en-  
deavour to be of ours, and then our Gracious  
God thereby will be glorified; our Brethren e-  
dified, and our owne soules eternally saved,  
at the Day of the Appearing of our

Lord *Iesus Christ.*

*Amen.*

*FINIS.*



Concionem hanc super illud 119.  
125. typis mandari permitto.

*Sa. Baker.*

*Lond. Novemb. 6.*

1638.

